

Discussion of “The Shrinkage-Delinkage Trade-off”

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3. Try to capture important properties of p with simple \mathcal{Q}
 - Begins with understanding how things go wrong (**this paper!**)
 - Hope to have our cake and eat it too (e.g. marginals *and* easy computation)
 - Much harder! But important, with big potential benefits

I would love to see more work like this!

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Restricted variational families (mean field) can lead to poor posterior approximations.

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Theorem 3.6

Let the target distribution has the constant ε -correlation matrix.

As the dimension n of the matrix goes to infinity:

- Each marginal mean field variance is wrong by ε
- The per-component entropy gap $\rightarrow 0$

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Why is n the right scaling? Why do we care about the numerical entropy gap anyway?

It’s clear why variance matters. Less so the entropy gap, especially as n changes.